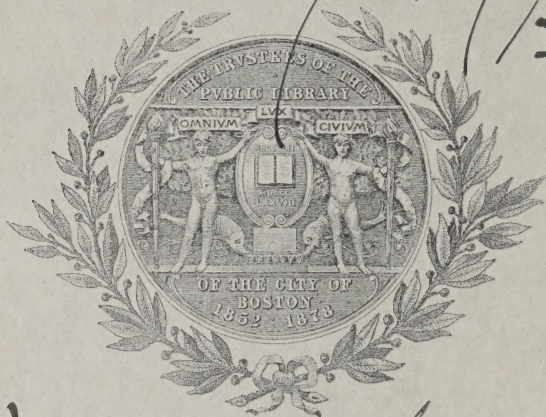


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HOUSE No. 131

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

FIRST REPORT OF THE ART COMMISSION.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The State Art Commission was created by chapter 422 of the Acts of 1910, which is as follows:—

SECTION 1. An art commission for the commonwealth is hereby established, to consist of five citizens of the commonwealth, to be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the council, to hold office for the term of five years from the date of their commission. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the commission may be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. The commission shall serve without compensation, and shall have power to adopt its own rules and to elect such officers from its own members as may be deemed proper.

SECTION 2. It shall be the duty of the commission to act in an advisory capacity relative to the creation, acquisition, construction, erection or remodeling by the commonwealth, or upon any land owned by the commonwealth, of any work of art, and relative to the artistic character of any building constructed, erected or remodeled by the commonwealth, or upon land owned by the commonwealth; and when, upon the request of the governor, there shall be submitted to said commission any plan, proposal or offer relating to the creation, acquisition, construction, erection or remodeling by the commonwealth, or on land or in a building owned by the commonwealth, of any work of art, or relating to the erection, construction or remodeling of any building to be owned by the commonwealth or on commonwealth land, and such plan, proposal or offer is accompanied

by designs, descriptions, specifications, drawings or models sufficient to enable the commission to determine the artistic character of such work of art or building, it shall be the duty of the commission to file with the governor, within sixty days after the submission of the matter descriptive of such work of art or building, its opinion, either approving or condemning the same, to which the commission may add such suggestions and recommendations as it deems proper. The term "building", as used herein, shall include structures intended for human occupation and use, and also all bridges, arches, gates, walls or other permanent structures of any character, and the term "work of art", as used herein shall include any painting, portrait, mural decoration, stained glass, statue, bas-relief, ornament, fountain, or any other article or structure of a permanent character intended for decoration or commemoration.

The said commission respectfully submits the following report:—

On Oct. 13, 1910, the members of the commission organized at the State House, when Walter Gilman Page was elected secretary. A communication was received from Governor Draper enclosing the following letter from Mr. Sylvester Baxter, secretary of the Metropolitan Improvement League, with a request for a reply:—

HON. EBEN S. DRAPER, *Governor of Massachusetts.*

DEAR SIR:—Permit me, in the line of my duty, to call Your Excellency's attention to the labels attached to the portraits of the Governors of the Commonwealth in the State House. The glaringly bad taste in the design and wording of these labels is the subject of much unfavorable comment on the part of visitors, and surprise is expressed that Massachusetts, which has a reputation for good taste in art, should be responsible for such a display.

These labels are offensive in two particulars. They are altogether too large and conspicuous; but, worst of all, the abbreviation "Gov. of Mass." violates the rules of propriety for inscriptions in a public place, both being undignified and vulgar.

The name of the State is superfluous in this connection. Simply the name of the Governor and the year or years of his service would be sufficient. I would suggest that the new State Art Commission be requested to submit suitable designs for a new form of label. The cost of the change would be trifling.

Most respectfully yours,

SYLVESTER BAXTER.

The commission made reply to His Excellency as follows:—

Hon. EBEN S. DRAPER, *Governor*.

DEAR SIR:—The communication from Mr. Sylvester Baxter, secretary of the Metropolitan Improvement League, which was referred to this commission October 6, has received careful consideration, and it is the unanimous opinion of this commission that Mr. Baxter's objections to the labels of the past Governors of the Commonwealth are well based.

In accordance with Your Excellency's request the commission respectfully offers the following suggestions:—

(1) That a brass cartel of proper proportions, and bearing on a gold ground in black letters the full name of the subject of the portrait, the word "Governor" and the time of service, be attached to the frame.

(2) As the cartel may be difficult to decipher and of too concise a character for historical purposes, it is further suggested that a card be placed in the rooms where these portraits are to be found, containing a brief biographical sketch of the subjects of the portraits.

As these suggestions have not yet been adopted, the commission respectfully recommends that steps be taken to put them into effect.

Provision was made by the Legislature of 1910 for the erection of two battlefield memorials, one at Valley Forge, Pa., the other at Petersburg, Va. The design for the Petersburg memorial, when submitted to the commission, was unanimously disapproved as possessing no artistic merit. The commission thinks it proper to point out that it is in such projects as these (where the appropriations are too modest to attract a highly skilled order of artistic talent) that the official taste of the Commonwealth may most easily be compromised. That this is so is attested by the custom, which the commission finds to be long established, of entrusting the design as well as the execution of such memorials to granite contractors,—the very condition out of which has developed so many inartistic memorials of the civil war all over the country. It is the conclusion, therefore, of the commission that the first step in the expenditure of the State's appro-

priation should be to procure the services of a skilled architect. This policy was successfully tested in the case of the Petersburg memorial. On the recommendation of the Art Commission, an architect was employed by the committee in charge and a very satisfactory design was secured. The plans submitted by the Valley Forge Military Monument Commission, on the other hand, were of a distinctly meritorious character, and were, with some slight modifications of detail unanimously approved. Blue prints of the plans as well as photographs of these completed works are filed with the commission.

In February, 1911, there was submitted to the commission a model at full size of the memorial group by Bela Pratt, intended for placing in the Hall of Flags in the State House. The model and the situation met with the approval of the commission.

In November, 1911, the commission was asked to approve, for placing in the State House, a bronze tablet containing Lincoln's address at Gettysburg, accompanied by a bronze bust of Lincoln, after the death mask by Volk. The commission having learned that a similar tablet was already in a neighboring city, this was inspected by a subcommittee of the commission and found unworthy of acceptance. A course similar to that pursued in the development of a satisfactory design for the Petersburg memorial was then adopted. An original design was prepared under the guidance of the Art Commission, with studied regard for the situation chosen, — in this instance the eastern wall of Doric Hall.

Two oil portraits of past Governors have received the approval of the commission, one of the Hon. W. Murray Crane by William W. Churchill, the other of Hon. William L. Douglas by Arthur M. Hazard. In the matter of the selection of the artist, whether painter, sculptor or architect, it is obviously important to the interests of the State that his ability and standing are so well established that his work when finished shall in all probability meet with the approval of the Art Commission. In this interest, the commission recommends that its opinion in such case be invited when the employment

of an artist is under consideration. The Commonwealth may in this way be saved the embarrassment of paying, more or less substantially, for work which the commission may feel consistently bound to reject. In the exercise of such discrimination the commission would sacrifice none of its rights freely to criticise and correct the artist's work when submitted for final judgment.

A matter of very large importance was submitted to the consideration of the commission in the form of an architectural scheme for the extension of the State House. The commission examined, in the rooms of the Executive Council, certain sketches therefor by Mr. William Chapman, architect. These contemplated a detached unit in the form of an office block extending from Hancock Avenue to Joy Street, with frontage on Mt. Vernon Street.

The following report was written to the Governor and Council:—

Hon. EUGENE N. FOSS, *Governor, Commonwealth of Massachusetts,*
Executive Department, State House.

YOUR EXCELLENCY:—This commission has carefully considered, in consultation with their author, the preliminary drawings for a proposed State office building designed to occupy, in its complete development, the land west of the State House bounded by Joy Street, Mt. Vernon Street, Mt. Vernon Place and Hancock Avenue. Approximately half of this property is now owned by the Commonwealth, and only that measure of the ultimate structure as will accommodate itself to this area is proposed for immediate erection. The building, as shown, is six stories high above the line of Mt. Vernon Street, and is set so as to be distant about 45 feet from the State House, communication with which is secured by means of a tunnel connection.

It seems to have been assumed that the mere physical independence of the construction thus situated, favored for the present at least by a screen of trees and dwellings from a critical view, sufficed to remove it out of responsible architectural relation to the main structure. The commission cannot agree with this principle. Indeed, it is denied even by the author of the design, who has made the attempt of establishing a relationship by his scheme of color and by the incorporation, in an otherwise frankly utilitarian design, of certain decorative details peculiar to the original mass. It is admitted, moreover, that even the complete structure, as proposed, would pro-

vide only partially for the future needs of the State, which would ultimately have to be met by a construction of corresponding design on the east side. It is apparent, therefore, that the merits of this scheme must be considered in association with the architectural demands of the central building. That these are of a nature to compel more than the usual respect is well recognized. What is popularly known as "the Bulfinch front" is one of the most remarkable examples of colonial architecture now remaining, and unquestionably a great artistic asset of this community. The veneration in which it is held by the architectural profession and the public was strikingly illustrated some years ago when it was proposed to alter it. To contrive such a scheme of extension as will satisfy, with reasonable regard for economy, the needs of utility, and develop at the same time a harmonious relationship with this remarkable composition, is to state the general terms of the problem. The present design does not accomplish this in the following respects: (1) It is unrelated, and, so far as we can perceive, unrelatable to any organic scheme of development. Even though it could architecturally qualify as a unit of such a scheme, it is clear that such a mass could not be symmetrically repeated on the east side, as the available space towards Bowdoin Street would not nearly admit of it. When this eastern development did take shape, it would manifestly be necessary, in the interest of mere architectural decency, to remove the screen of buildings from in front of the western extension, when the lop-sidedness of the scheme would be glaringly apparent. (2) Whereas, the existence of Hancock Avenue might explain the separation of the extension from the main structure on the west, the corresponding hiatus on the east would, by the absence of such a condition, be meaningless as well as ugly. (3) The longitudinal extension of the central mass on a single axis is fundamentally an error, which would result in architectural monotony and in serious prejudice to the importance of the dome.

On coming to this negative decision the commission conceived it to be its duty to examine the scheme recently published with the official endorsement of the Society of Architects. This provides for the organic and symmetrical development of the central structure by means of two comparatively short wings terminated by pavilions of considerably southerly projection, junction with the main mass being saliently contrived so as to admit of the interior corridors being related to the great central staircase. This scheme results externally in a composition of remarkable stateliness and beauty, recalling in its skyline, rather strikingly, the capitol at Washington. The spirit of the Bulfinch architecture is continued into the development with thorough understanding and skill. Artistically, this solution of the problem, so far as it is concerned with the Beacon Street end of the capitol, is convincing and admirable. Nor does the com-

mission perceive that this scheme is put at disadvantage by the other even on the most practical basis of comparison. Obviously, the office building idea carried to its logical issue means the serious economical waste on each side of the central building of 45 feet of valuable frontage. It need hardly be pointed out, too, that a development which admits of organic extension of the various floors possesses a large measure of practical advantage over one which provides communication only by a subterranean passage 45 feet long. Indeed, while we deprecate a too utilitarian point of view, it may even be seriously questioned whether, on exact comparison of available floor areas, a partial realization of the artistic scheme would not be found to be the cheaper proposition. Such partial realization might consist of the western wing without its pavilion, which would involve the taking of a single building lot beyond the property now owned by the State. It is obvious, however, that the construction of the eastern wing and pavilion would represent the most intelligible unit of development, and one which would prove none too extensive to provide for the growing needs of the Commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,

WALDO LINCOLN.

CHARLES D. MAGINNIS.

HENRY S. HUNNEWELL.

WILLIAM A. BURNHAM.

WALTER GILMAN PAGE.

Subsequently, other plans by the same architect were submitted, which took account of the criticism directed against the office building type by such bodies as the Society of Architects and many individuals. The commission, however, felt very strongly that the project demanded professional direction of an unusually skilled order, and, without putting to question the experience and ability of the architect already associated with the enterprise, were convinced that the best interests of the Commonwealth called for the placing in association with him another architect of trained taste and authority. At a consultation on the subject between the Art Commission and the members of the State House Commission, it was agreed that the work be entrusted to three architects, namely, Robert D. Andrews, W. W. Chapman and R. Clipston Sturgis. For a number of months these gentlemen have been studying the problem to arrive at a more economical and artistic solution. From time to time they

have brought into conference the State House Commission and the Art Commission.

Many other meetings besides the formal ones of the commission have been held, and considerable work has been done on the part of the individual members which is not here made a matter of record.

As the commission has no appropriation, it depends on the good will of the Executive for meeting its expenses. There should be a small annual appropriation. The commission feels that it has amply demonstrated its usefulness as an advisory body. Its work has aroused considerable interest throughout the country, and its advice has been sought by public bodies in other States.

Respectfully submitted,

WALDO LINCOLN.
CHARLES D. MAGINNIS.
HENRY S. HUNNEWELL.
WILLIAM A. BURNHAM.
WALTER GILMAN PAGE.

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HOUSE No. 2183

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

SECOND REPORT OF THE ART COMMISSION FOR THE COMMONWEALTH.

Feb 2 1913

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Commission respectfully submits the following report: —

Since the first report of the Commission was presented, January, 1913 (see House, No. 131), the most important matter to come before the Art Commission was in connection with the State House extension.

On June 13, 1912, the State House Commission was authorized and directed to "cause to be prepared plans for alterations in or additions to the present State House." They were directed to consult with and obtain the co-operation of the Art Commission. The Art Commission insisted that the first step should be the selection of three architects to undertake the work conjointly. The State House Commission agreed to this, and Messrs. Andrews, Sturgis and Chapman were selected. In making their report on Sept. 12, 1912, the architects, feeling it to be of the highest importance that the new portion, while harmonizing with the old, should not challenge comparison with, but should be subordinate to the Bulfinch Front, advised the use of common brick, with a view to painting the whole exterior white, similar to the Capitol in Washington.

The special work of the Art Commission in connection with the entire subject was in the matter of material, and that portion of the bill which refers to the question of material in specific

terms received the endorsement of your Commission, the exact wording being as follows: "The material used to be common brick, to harmonize with the Bulfinch front."

On Jan. 1, 1913, a report was submitted to the Legislature by the State House Commission, authorized by chapter 150, Resolves of 1912, and this report treated in detail of all the steps taken by the State House Commission and the Art Commission relative to the proposed additions to the State House, accompanied by a bill providing for the construction of additions to the State House. The report of the State House Commission was referred to the committee on State House and libraries, and this committee, while adopting the plans in their general form, reported a bill, which was approved by the Legislature of 1914, which made it obligatory upon the architects to use marble, at the same time providing for the appointment of a special State House Commission to carry out the will of the Legislature as laid down in this report.

On the request of the Governor for an opinion, the Art Commission submitted the following communication to the Governor and Council, which states clearly the Commission's attitude on the plans for the State House extension, and relieves it from any responsibility in the final selection of material:—

To the Governor and Honorable Council.

The Art Commission has given careful consideration to the request for its opinion of the artistic merits of the plans for the proposed addition to the State House. The project originally took the form of an independent office building, designed to be placed on land west of the State House. In its report disapproving of this plan, the Commission declared, in part, as follows:—

That the merits of this scheme must be considered in association with the architectural demands of the central building. That these are of a nature to compel more than ordinary respect is well recognized. What is popularly known as the "Bulfinch front" is one of the most remarkable examples of colonial architecture now remaining, and unquestionably a great artistic asset of this community. The veneration in which it is held by the architectural profession and the public was strikingly illustrated some years ago when a proposal was made to alter it. To contrive such a scheme of extension as will economically satisfy the needs of utility and develop at the same time a harmonious relationship with this remarkable composition is to state the general terms of the problem.

The idea of the office building was early abandoned, and several architects of distinction were engaged by the State House Commission to make exhaustive study of the situation. This study issued in a plan of monumental character, which adopted the "Bulfinch front" as its organic architectural center. The high interests of the "Bulfinch" portion, historically and artistically, were bound to control in such relationship, and did control absolutely the artistic character of the new development. With unanimous approval of the Art Commission and the architects, therefore, the State House Commission recommended the adoption of these plans to the Legislature of 1913, — with the specification that the new work, like the old, be constructed of brick, the whole to be painted a uniform white. These plans were adopted by the Legislature with an amendment as to material, which prohibited the use of painted brick, limiting the choice to unpainted red brick or stone. Between the claims of these two materials this Commission would unhesitatingly pronounce in favor of marble. It conceives, however, that its duty extends beyond the expression of an opinion on an issue so artificially prescribed. The Commission feels bound to set down here the considerations which support the view in favor of painted brick, which, in common with the architects, it has held from the beginning. The question is not as to the abstract propriety of certain materials in their relation to monumental building. Were it such, the claims of brick, painted or unpainted, might be dismissed at once. It would be universally conceded that a new State House for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should be clothed in marble. The problem, as it appears to the Commission, however, is how to extend the "Bulfinch front" so as to secure the most homogeneous effect with the least menace to the integrity of this historical monument. The architectural form of this extension has already been dictated by this consideration, and to the acceptance of the Legislature. Why should the material be exempted? The incongruity of marble wings in contact with the brickwork of the old structure, by reason of differences both of scale and texture, would be beyond disguise, making a condition which would hardly fail to be a constant invitation to cover the original building with marble also. This transformation could clearly be advocated in such a contingency with much show of artistic propriety. The importance, indeed the necessity, of a homogeneous façade of marble would then be a consideration too obvious to resist. It is true that the Capitol at Washington, which is suggested by the plans now under consideration, consists of marble wings and a painted central body, but this central building is of sandstone, and, though painted, is of such similar texture and scale to the marble wings that, at a little distance, the eye cannot detect the difference. The historical importance of the "Bulfinch" building, therefore, is clearly involved in the issue under consideration, and its value to the Commonwealth should

be seriously weighed before definite action is taken in the matter. The Commission feels that it was the intention of the last Legislature to do nothing which would imperil the permanency of the "Bulfinch front," and is confident that, if it is clearly understood that the destruction of that building is threatened by the existing law, the Legislature will be willing to remove the restriction as to material.

The Commission, in view of what it feels to be the ultimate significance of the proposed use of marble in the addition, recommends Your Excellency and the Honorable Council to withhold your sanction of these plans until the Legislature has had an opportunity to consider the propriety of amending the present statute. That this course will result in delay is to be deplored, but the matter is too important not to justify further deliberation if thus a satisfactory result is secured. Moreover, as the Legislature meets next month, if prompt action be taken, the delay need not be serious.

The several matters which have come before the Commission for its decision may be summarized as follows:—

Memorial to John Hancock.—In accordance with a resolve of the Legislature relative to a proposed gift from the Massachusetts Society of Sons of the Revolution of a bust and tablet in commemoration of the services of John Hancock, the Commission selected the westerly wall of Doric Hall as a suitable place for the memorial, and later, when the design was submitted, accepted the same.

Massachusetts Building at the San Francisco Exposition.—The Commission approved the plans for a State building at the San Francisco Exposition, the design having previously been selected from a number of competitive plans by the Exposition Board of Managers for Massachusetts.

General Knox Trophy.—The design for this military trophy was approved.

The Concord Armory.—The Commission did not deem the drawings submitted worthy of approval.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Memorial.—The design submitted was approved.

Portrait of Ex-Governor Curtis Guild.—The portrait submitted was not approved, and in filing its report to the Governor and Council the Commission took the opportunity to define its attitude as follows:—

A situation [similar to this] occurred early in the existence of the Commission, and then, against its better judgment, it admitted an inferior portrait on account of the work and time which the artist had, in good faith, and without understanding the situation, put into it. To continue this course makes the appointment of an Art Commission useless and ridiculous. It was to prevent the acceptance of these unworthy portraits, of which the Commonwealth now owns an ample supply, that the Commission was established, and, after five years, it would seem that all whose portraits are to be offered should understand that, in selecting an artist, some attention should be paid to the fact that there is such a Commission which is to look after the interests of the Commonwealth.

The Commission is unanimous in suggesting that it should be consulted in all cases as to the selection of artists.

Registry of Local Art, Museum of Fine Arts. — The Commission received a request from the Museum of Fine Arts on behalf of its registry of local art for authority to examine works of art owned by the Commonwealth for the purpose of including a descriptive list of them in its permanent inventory of public art at the museum. The Commission voted that the request be granted, subject to the approval of the Governor and Council.

Portrait of Ex-Governor Bates. — The Commission approved of the portrait of ex-Governor John L. Bates, painted by William W. Churchill. This was the first instance where the Commission was consulted as to the standing of the painter of the proposed portrait before the contract was awarded.

The terms of service of all the members of the Commission expire on June 15, 1915, and this being the first Art Commission appointed under the authority of the Legislature, it seems a fitting time to recommend that the powers of the Commission be extended by granting to it, in such matters as come within its jurisdiction, an absolute veto power, subject to the approval of the Governor and Council.

At present the Commission is merely an advisory body, with the right, however, to demand that its opinion shall be asked on all works of art to be acquired by the Commonwealth and relative to the artistic character of any building erected by the Commonwealth or on land of the Commonwealth. During the

past five years, in the majority of matters on which the opinion of the Commission has been asked its decisions have been followed, and the intent of the act of the Legislature has probably been fully met; yet it is easy to see that a case may arise where, on a point of vital artistic importance, its decision, being opposed by interests not in sympathy with the highest motives, will be overruled, to the detriment of art and perhaps to the serious disadvantage of the Commonwealth.

The Commission is unpaid, but membership in it is attractive because honorable, and offering an opportunity to be of service to the State, but any citizen worthy of the position will more readily devote his abilities and knowledge to it if he feels that his opinions are not to be overruled, except for weighty cause to be determined by the Governor and Council.

During its term of service this Commission has expended less than \$150, the only items being for stationery, postage and typewriting, except an appropriation of \$25 for expenses connected with the representation of the Commission by its secretary at a conference of art commissions held at the City Hall, New York city; and the sum of \$10 appropriated for expenses in connection with the work of registering works of art belonging to the Commonwealth.

WALDO LINCOLN.

HENRY S. HUNNEWELL.

WILLIAM A. BURNHAM.

CHARLES D. MAGUINNIS.

WALTER GILMAN PAGE.

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HOUSE No. 1456

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

THIRD REPORT OF THE ART COMMISSION FOR THE COMMONWEALTH.

Feb 7 1916

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Commission respectfully submits the following report:

On October 14, 1915, the present Commission organized, with Charles D. Maginnis as Chairman and Charles R. Greco as Secretary.

Since the second report was presented (see House, No. 2183 of 1915), the various matters which have been submitted for the Commission may be summarized as follows: —

Curtis Guild Memorial. — A design by Cram & Ferguson, Architects, was presented by the Curtis Guild Memorial Committee, for a memorial tablet to be affixed to the staircase wall immediately facing the memorial to the Nurses of the Civil War. The position suggested was not considered appropriate by the Commission which, after careful examination of the available places throughout the building, selected, with the approval of the Sergeant-at-Arms, the present site on the west side of the lobby at the foot of the great staircase in the Annex. A development of the original design was made in more dignified scale and with greater simplicity of detail, which received the approval of the Commission.

The Bust of Former Governor Russell. — The attention of the Commission was on November 3, 1915, drawn to the fact that a bronze bust of Ex-Governor Russell which has been presented to the State some years ago by Mr. John

T. Wheelwright and several others for place in one of the smaller niches adjacent to the Hall of Flags had been removed. On inquiry the Commission found that the reasons for its removal were that the color of the bronze was considered disagreeably black, and moreover that the bust was improperly related in scale and position to the architectural outlines of the niche. The Commission took steps, with the approval of the Sergeant-at-Arms, to correct both these criticisms, first, — by lightening the local color of the bronze and secondly, — by providing a high marble plinth. These having been done, the bust was found to be agreeably adapted to the niche and has therefore been permanently replaced.

The Proposed Widening of Park Street. — The Commission was called into conference with the State House Commission to consider certain plans for the widening of Park Street before their proposed submission to a referendum at the ensuing election. The scheme which involved a ten-foot taking from the Common was calculated to relieve the congestion of Park Street, but the relation to it of other thoroughfares did not appear to the Commission to have been properly considered. The Commission, therefore, reported back to the conference its feeling that, until a satisfactory comprehensive plan had been developed, the Part Street widening should not be recommended.

State House Grounds. — The Art Commission was called into conference with the State House Commission regarding the design and development of the foreground of the enlarged State House. (See 250 General Acts, 1916). It was agreed that this was an interest which was definitely related to the architecture of the building and that consequently, the services of the architects should be continued and a thorough study be made of the subject, to be illustrated by models at a later date. Several schemes developed as a result of this study and these were submitted to the consideration of the Art Commission in January with a request for a recommendation. Legislative authority to carry out an acceptable scheme was desired at a very early date, but the briefest consideration of this important matter was allowed the Commission, which reported as follows: —

JANUARY 8, 1917.

State House Commission, State House, Boston, Mass.

GENTLEMEN: — The State Art Commission having examined and carefully considered the several schemes, illustrated by model, for the treatment of the enlarged foreground of the State House as demanded by the construction of the new wings, reports as follows: —

Two important considerations enter into this problem. First, the great extent of the new State House front should, in the opinion of the Commission, call for a foreground which is ample and spacious, and therefore in dignified relation in point of scale. Secondly, the streets in the immediate vicinity are of width quite out of proportion to the practical and artistic interests of a State Capitol, — indeed are so narrow as to present a traffic problem which is a serious one at the moment, and must inevitably grow more so as the years go on. Obviously, the line of the Common must be held to be intact, nor does the expedient suggested of a sidewalk within the Common fence instead of the outside, commend itself. The continuation of the present barrier wall on the North side of the street so as entirely to parallel the new frontage would besides rigidly perpetuating the present narrowness of the thoroughfare, tend, in effect, to aggravate it, particularly opposite the east wing. The present project offers an opportunity for such a dignified treatment of the State House foreground as will at the same time furnish some relief from these congested conditions.

Having in mind these considerations, the Art Commission has come to the conclusion that the design represented by model No. 3 presents the best solution of the problem and recommends its acceptance. In rendering this opinion, the Commission of course reserves judgment as to minor details which are a matter of further study.

Yours very truly,

S. DACRE BUSH,
BELA LYON PRATT,
CHARLES R. GRECO,
CHARLES D. MAGINNIS, *Chairman.*

This recommendation did not meet with the acceptance of the State House Commission which reported to the Legislature a bill based upon a scheme other than that selected. (See House 540). The site has now been carefully cleared by the razing of the Beacon Street residences, so that the problem is clearly disclosed. It is the judgment of the Commission that the time and the conditions are both favorable to the finding of a solution which shall take due account not only of the artistic, but of the practical interests involved.

The Commission, therefore, strongly urges that the matter be referred back to the State House Commission and the Art Commission for joint re-consideration and report.

Portraits of the Governors. — It is recommended that a larger sum of money than the customary appropriation of one thousand dollars be made available for the painting of the retiring governor, as experience has proven that the amount referred to is too small to secure the best talent.

Since the establishment of this custom of having the portraits of the governors of the Commonwealth painted, each retiring executive has exercised the privilege of selecting the artist with the approval of the Art Commission, whose judgment was subsequently passed upon the finished work. Some objection to this plan has developed in practice and it is recommended that in the future the artist be selected by this Commission, subject to the approval of the Governor and Council.

It is further recommended that the same principle be made to apply to the selection of the architect and sculptors in the case of state memorials whose design requires this class of professional service.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES D. MAGINNIS.
CYRUS E. DALLIN.
WALTER GILMAN PAGE.
CHARLES R. GRECO.
HERMAN D. MURPHY.

1896-1897

HOUSE No. 3

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

FOURTH REPORT OF THE ART COMMISSION FOR THE COMMONWEALTH.

Feb 2 1897

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Commission respectfully submits the following report:—

1. *Cartels for Portraits of Former Governors.*—The Commission is pleased to report that, after long delay, its recommendations made in former reports, which suggested certain changes in the form of the previously adopted inscriptions, have been carried out and a far more dignified appearance has been obtained.

2. *Portrait of Hon. Curtis Guild.*—An oil portrait of former Governor Curtis Guild, by Mr. S. B. Baker, was approved by the Commission and placed in the Executive Department.

3. *Portraits of Former Governors.*—It is proper to state here that the Commission has found it difficult to secure the best results for the Commonwealth owing to the small amount appropriated by act of Legislature for the purpose of procuring portraits of former Governors, and in order to enlist the services of the best talent an increase in the amount appropriated was granted by the Legislature and approved by the Governor. This increase in amount will secure for the Commonwealth portraits which will be a credit as works of art, the Commission having consistently maintained that the likeness, whatever value it may ulti-

mately possess historically, is not enough evidence of artistic merit.

4. *Conference of Art Commissions.* — The Commission was represented at a Conference of Art Commissions held in Boston on Jan. 2, 1919, when an important discussion took place on the subject of war memorials.

5. Several requests having been made by persons representing cities and towns for professional advice as to the matter of suitable war memorials, and such services not being within the limits set by the act under whose provisions the Commission functions, it was voted —

That the Commission request the Governor and Council to authorize and instruct it to act in an advisory capacity to local authorities, regarding the erection of war memorials throughout the State, as the Commission is desirous of promoting the development of the highest possible standard in the local war memorials in Massachusetts.

Authority being granted for the purpose as requested, the Commission issued the following circular letter to the board of selectmen of towns, and to the mayors of cities throughout the Commonwealth: —

DEAR SIR: — This Commission was established by the Legislature (Acts of 1910, chapter 422) for the purpose of advising on matters of art, in so far as the property of the Commonwealth gave jurisdiction.

Although the Commission is confined in its authority to these limits, the members feel, that, as a body, they may be of professional assistance to the cities and towns within the Commonwealth, if such services were desired, more especially at this time, when the matter of suitable war memorials may be in contemplation, provided, that wherever an art commission is already established in any city or town this offer of our assistance does not apply.

There will be no expense connected with a request for our services, and we shall be glad as a commission to act in an advisory capacity within the limits of the powers granted by the Legislature.

Yours very respectfully,

CHARLES R. GRECO,
Secretary.

Replies were received from Clinton, Cambridge, Attleboro, Framingham, Winchester, Holland, Plympton, Vineyard Haven, Rochester, Westwood, Westminster, West Upton, Williamstown, Chelmsford and Orleans.

The Commission has been of service in several instances, especially at Orleans, and as soon as plans are formulated by several of the cities and towns, the Commission will be called upon to act in an advisory capacity. The Commission feels, therefore, that its suggestion has been justified.

6. *Anne Hutchinson*. — The matter of the proposed statue of Anne Hutchinson was brought to the attention of the Commission, and while approval of the placing of works of plastic art in temporary material within or upon property belonging to the Commonwealth is a matter for careful judgment, in view of the fact that this particular request implied a permanent form of material within a reasonable period of time, it was therefore voted —

That this Commission recommends that the statue of Anne Hutchinson be placed in the State House temporarily, beside the entrance to the Hall of Flags, at the foot of the House staircase, for a period of two years. If the statue is not replaced by one in bronze by that time, said statue is to be removed. Furthermore, the Commonwealth will not be responsible for any damage to the statue, and no expense to be incurred by placing or removing same.

7. *Flag Receptacle*. — The receptacle authorized at a special session of the Legislature, 1919, for the care and preservation of the flags carried by Massachusetts troops at the time of the World War, met with the disapproval of this Commission; and as the receptacle was practically completed before the Commission was even aware of its existence, to justify its own standards, a petition was presented asking for an amendment to the original act, which had given full powers to the sergeant-at-arms to carry out the provisions of the Acts of 1919. As a result of the initiatory work of the Commission, and acting upon its advice as to a proper and dignified placing of the flags, new legislation has resulted.

8. The suitable lighting of the Guild Memorial has been brought to the attention of the proper authority, and will soon be completed.

9. The Commission objects to the exhibition of trophies in glass cases in Doric Hall, or of any object that is inappropriate and not in conformity with the dignity of that place. If some other location could be found for the por-

traits of former Governors, leaving the hall free for tablets and sculptural adornment, a more harmonious result would be obtained. Also if the photographs which hang in the lobby of the Executive Department could be removed and oil portraits substituted, a better effect would be produced.

10. Under the Acts of 1910, chapter 422, authorizing the appointment by the Governor of the Commonwealth of an art commission, it was generally understood and no doubt intended that said Commission should have some definite purpose for its existence, and while the wording of the act denotes that the services of this Commission are to be advisory, the opinion rendered by the Attorney-General of the Commonwealth indicates very strongly that all matters coming within the jurisdiction of the Commission should be submitted to them for their consideration. But in at least two instances of recent date, *e.g.*, the flag receptacle and the tablet dedicated to the services of animals during the World War, the Commission was not consulted.

The Commission desires to emphasize the above statements by the fact that it has cost the Commonwealth of Massachusetts over \$7,000, as the flag receptacle has been deemed, not only by the Commission, but by parties more sentimentally interested, as absolutely worthless. From the Commission's point of view, it was a grievous blunder in every particular. From the viewpoint of the American Legion, it was deemed an insult. In consequence of the initiation of the Art Commission, and the objections of the American Legion, a new plan has been adopted, which conforms in all particulars with patriotism and good taste.

In view of these two circumstances, it is the desire of the Commission, in order to avoid criticism and embarrassment, as well as expense in the future, that certain amendments be made to the act which governs the powers of this Commission, giving it more authority and making it obligatory upon the part of State officials to bring before it matters proper for its jurisdiction.

Therefore the Commission respectfully suggests the following amendments:—

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE DUTIES AND POWERS OF THE ART
COMMISSION.

Be it enacted, etc., as follows:

SECTION 1. Section one of chapter four hundred and twenty-two of the acts of nineteen hundred and ten is hereby amended by inserting after the word "compensation", in the seventh line, the words: — but may expend such sums for its necessary expenses as shall be approved by the governor and council, — so as to read as follows: — *Section 1.* An art commission for the commonwealth is hereby established, to consist of five citizens of the commonwealth, to be appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the council, to hold office for the term of five years from the date of their commission. Any vacancy occurring in the membership of the commission may be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner in which the original appointment was made. The commission shall serve without compensation, but may expend such sums for its necessary expenses as shall be approved by the governor and council, and shall have power to adopt its own rules and to elect such officers from its own members as may be deemed proper.

SECTION 2. Section two of chapter four hundred and twenty-two of the acts of nineteen hundred and ten is hereby amended by striking out, in the second line, the words "in an advisory capacity"; by striking out, in the eighth line, the words "when, upon the request of the governor"; and by inserting after the word "proper", in the twenty-eighth line, the words: — all decisions made by the commission to be final, subject to appeal before the governor and council, said appeal to be made within thirty days after the decision of the commission has been rendered, — so as to read as follows: — *Section 2.* It shall be the duty of the commission to act relative to the creation, acquisition, construction, erection or remodeling by the commonwealth, or upon any land owned by the commonwealth, of any work of art, and relative to the artistic character of any building constructed, erected or remodeled by the commonwealth, or upon land owned by the commonwealth; and there shall be submitted to said commission any plan, proposal or offer relating to the creation, acquisition, construction, erection or remodeling by the commonwealth, of any work of art, or relating to the erection, construction or remodeling of any building to be owned by the commonwealth or on commonwealth land, and such plan, proposal or offer is accompanied by designs, descriptions, specifications, drawings or models sufficient to enable the commission to determine the artistic character of such work of art or building, and it shall be the duty of the commission to file with the governor within sixty days after the submission of the matter descriptive of such work or art or building, its opinion, either approving or condemning same, to which the commission may add

such suggestions and recommendations as it deems proper. All decisions made by the commission to be final, subject to appeal before the governor and council, said appeal to be made within thirty days after the decision of the commission has been rendered. The term "building" as used herein, shall include structures intended for human occupation and use, and also all bridges, arches, gates, walls or other permanent structures of any character; and the term "work of art," as used herein, shall include any painting, portrait, mural decoration, stained glass, statue, bas-relief, ornament, fountain, or any other article or structure of a permanent character intended for decoration or commemoration.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES D. MAGINNIS.

CYRUS E. DALLEN.

CHARLES R. GRECO.

WALTER GILMAN PAGE.

